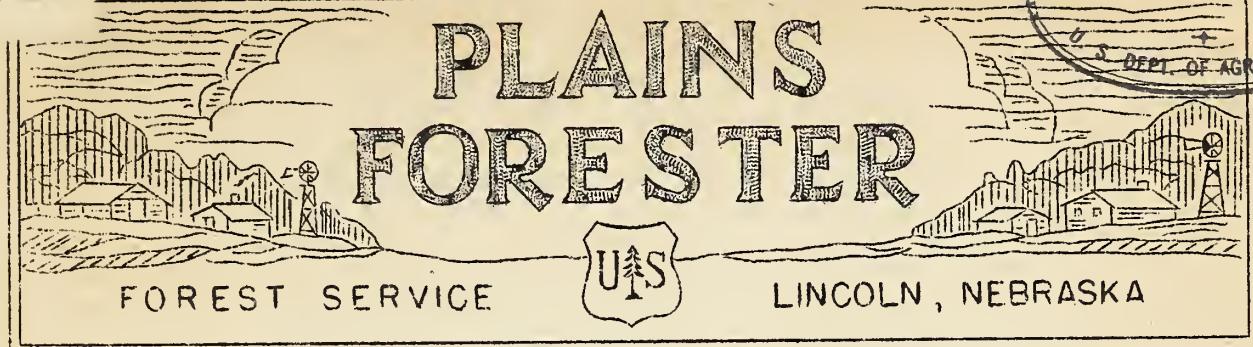


Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.





Vol. 6, No. 6

June - 1941

SELF-DISCIPLINE

By Paul H. Roberts

LIBRARY
 Prairie States
 Forestry Project

Individual initiative, self-reliance, and willingness to exercise individual judgment are excellent characteristics, and there is wide latitude within a new and far-flung organization such as this for the exercise of them. In fact, it is essential that personnel in key positions, particularly, exercise these characteristics to a marked degree if they are to redeem their responsibilities.

But an organization of this kind has objectives and purposes toward the accomplishment of which must be directed the efforts of all its components. Furthermore, the accomplishment of these common purposes necessitates, within the range of recognized variability in conditions and situations, uniformity of action by individuals and the various units of the whole organization. This in turn requires the establishment of policies, plans of action, and technical and operating standards of performance which serve as general controls over the character of the work done and provide in part the necessary guidance and direction to the whole effort. Thus, these things impose restraints upon individual initiative and independence of action and the exercise of individual judgment.

However, all the policies, plans, and standards of performance that could be devised would be ineffectual in attaining application of the full power of accomplishment of a widely scattered organization of this kind unless individuals in key positions are capable of self-imposed restraints upon their own actions. The organization as such must have discipline, but by far the most important element in good organizational discipline is that imposed by the individual upon himself.

Such self-discipline finds its roots in many sources. Part of it lies in the inherent characteristics of the individual - in his ability to recognize and overcome or offset his own weaknesses, properly appraise his own strengths, and free himself of prejudices; and in his ability to distinguish between situations where he should rely upon himself, and those where he should seek advice from his superior officers. It springs from the depth of his belief in the worthwhileness of the work; from loyalty to the job and the organization of which he is a part; from his own processes of thinking about the job and personal desire to make his maximum contribution to it; from his thoroughness of understanding and knowledge of the job; from his comprehension of the necessity for controls on his own actions; and from recognition of the need for dovetailing teamwork and the best in individual effort.

CAR DOORS FOR GRAPEHOE SLEDS

They say, "Necessity is the mother of invention." When need for a grapehoe sled arose near the end of the cultivation season last year, we decided to use as a substitute an old car door procured from the city dump. The top part, forming the frame for the windows, was cut off, and two pieces of strap iron were bolted to the outer surface at the top to make the hitch for drag chain. The lift mechanism for the windows having been removed, the braces formed the platform to stand on. Not much faith was placed in the length of service the door would give with the continual wear on the metal while it was being dragged over the ground with a man standing on it, but this sled was used for about five weeks continuously and very little wear was noted on the under surface.

That the door has more side slippage than the sleds with runners when used on slopes was the only criticism offered by men using the doors as sleds. The reports in favor of using this type of sled again this year, mentioned these advantages: The sled did not collect trash in front and on top of it or allow the trash to ball up under the sled, as the curved door allowed the weight to be shifted to the back of the sled, causing the front to rise, and allowing the sled to ride over the trash. The sled is guided easily behind the hoes by shifting the weight from one side to the other. It is less bulky, and lighter and easier to load and unload from a truck or pickup than regular wooden sleds.

This spring we are trying two types of runners on the eight doors being used as sleds. One group of sleds has runners made of two-inch channel iron bolted to each side of the door with the flat surface of the channel next to the door, so that the iron will form cutting runners. The other group has "T" iron for runners, two strips of which are fastened on each side of the door with the leg or upright of the "T" forming the runner and the cross being bolted to the door. These two types of runners are old sign posts used by the county and discarded because of being bent or split. The cost per door plus other equipment used in making the sled (exclusive of labor) is about twenty cents each.

Doors with steel reenforcing such as those from Model "A" Ford roadsters will make the best sleds. Front doors from a Chevrolet four-door are very good, but must have a platform built in of light wood for the men to stand on. The smaller the door the better it will work as a sled, and an all-steel door will reduce the extra work of putting in a platform.

I have found the use of car doors to be practical as sleds especially when runners are added to make them more efficient. However, there is still room for improvement which will have to be made as this cultivation season goes on.

- R. G. Cameron, Kans.

NEBRASKA TO HAVE ANOTHER FORESTRY FIELD DAY

Another Northeastern Nebraska Forestry Field Day and Picnic is planned for June 22. The event this year will be held in Gilman Park at Pierce. Tours of shelterbelt plantings, picnic dinners, a talk by Congressman Karl Stefan, and a water carnival are to be the attractions of the day.

The Field Day is being sponsored by the same 21 northeastern Nebraska towns that so effectively and successfully backed the program last year. A crowd estimated at 12,000 to 15,000 attended last year's Field Day at Neligh and one of similar size is expected at Pierce on June 22.

You are all hereby invited to attend Nebraska's Field Day and I hope we'll see you June 22.

- John L. Emerson, Nebr.

EVEN AS THE BUFFALO AND THE HEATH HEN?

About every so often in the past someone has taken the Project to task in the public prints on account of our rodent control operations, generally because of our poisoning activities. The idea has been not to defend the jack rabbit as such, but rather to protest what the writer considers to be an unsportsmanlike advantage taken of Br'er Rabbit.

In South Dakota, though, people are now beginning to wonder about the economic status of this creature, which has always been considered a prime pest. The Vermillion Republican notes that some \$300,000 was derived from the sale of jack rabbit pelts and carcasses last year and that pressure now is being brought on the Game and Fish Commission to establish a closed season on the rabbits. The Mitchell Republic quotes the Milbank Review as saying: "Organized hunts and annual slaughter of the little animals in great numbers is comparatively new and is indulged in partly for pure sport and partly for revenue. If it is continued without control or restriction, it does not require a very wise man to be able to realize that before many years hunting parties and our automobiles will have just about wiped the jack rabbits from our State." The Republic goes on to say: "The point is that we are witnessing a war of extermination against the rabbits, which is not intended to be that. It is simply that the yearly rabbit hunts have become popular as a sport and will accomplish the unintentional result of making rabbits extinct in a few years unless the State adopts some policy in the matter. If we want the rabbits wiped out on the grounds that they are pests, we will soon have the job done. But if we want to keep them for future hunting purposes, it will be necessary to take action soon."

WHAT! ANIMALS, TOO?

With the world turned topsy-turvy and humanity seemingly bent on self-destruction; with misfortune, sorrow, agony, anguish, grief, misery and privation staring us in the face, there is little wonder we poor mortals should become afflicted with mental aberration.

So when Keith McKee came in from a field trip and reported ducks swimming in a shelterbelt I was moved to compassion. When he came in from a later trip and reported ground squirrels climbing trees, I thought it was almost time to take action. But now we have pictures showing rabbit damage to trees seven feet from the ground indicating tree-climbing rabbits, and recently I was called upon to capture a beaver on the lawn of the State Hospital, which is the highest point of ground surrounding Jamestown.

With the animals going haywire too, it is time we viewed things with alarm.

- Auburn S. Coe, N. Dak.

MORE AND BETTER CULTIVATION

People are funny animals. They generally react exactly opposite to what one expects. For example, in previous years we have had considerable difficulty in getting cultivation. In fact we have only got a portion of the cooperators to take proper care of their belts. The trees have suffered for lack of proper attention and apparently some owners never become concerned about them. This was during years when few times existed for more than two or three days when they could not cultivate due to weather.

This year our official weather records show that it rained 37 days during April and May (16 days in April and 21 days in May). Records also show that we only lack some 3.5 inches having our annual rainfall in the first five months of the year. Therefore one can see it has been pretty wet all year.

Everyone from the State Director to the Squad Foremen was all set for a hard task of getting any cultivations in a year like this. Don't ask why or how they did it, but we are getting more and better cultivation this year than we ever have in the past. About the only belts we have that are not in fair shape are those that are so wet that the land would bog a saddle blanket. Most of the owners of these belts are coming in and apologizing for not being able to cultivate.

I have seen cultivated a good number of belts that were planted during the "Dark Ages" of the project that never were cultivated before. I saw one such fellow cultivating a belt planted in 1938. It had a fair survival of about 60 or 70% well distributed and badly retarded due to weed compositions. I could not resist stopping and making inquiry as to why he had decided to cultivate.

I approached him about his belt having lots of live trees and he confessed that they had never had a chance. He told me that he had decided that if they could live during the past that they would really amount to something if given a chance, so he decided to clean them out and take care of them. He is now convinced that trees could be grown on his farm if cared for, and he intends to take care of them from now on.

Another cooperator was questioned as to why so many more people were taking good care of their belts this year than previously. His interpretation was that people with poor belts had probably observed that the good belts were those that had been well cared for.

We are not exactly concerned with the why of it, but we do hope the good work continues through the year. We are looking forward to the busy crop time and wondering if the shelterbelts will continue to have the care that they are now receiving.

- James W. Kyle, Okla.

According to Harold J. Shepstone, noted wildlife authority, the ostrich is no larger than a chicken when hatched. Yet for the first five or six months of its career it springs up at the rate of ten to twelve inches a month.

- Wildlife Lines (from "Conservation")

NEWS STORY OF THE MONTH (Matador Tribune, Matador, Texas)

GARDENS ARE
PLANTED IN
SHELTERBELTS

Farm gardens including numerous watermelon patches are being planted in many areas protected by shelterbelts. County Agents and Home Demonstration Agents throughout much of Northwest Texas report an increased number of farmers are taking advantage of these areas which are protected from blasting winds and the scorching effects of hot sun.

Peas, corn, beans, okra, watermelons and numerous other items so necessary to the proper nutrition of young and old folks alike, are being planted in farm gardens.

The only successful gardens in the past have been located near farm buildings, near orchards or near a natural grove of trees.

Before shelterbelts were so well known in this part of Motley County, Elbert Reeves planted Chinese Elm around a garden site which has been giving excellent protection on this little plot of ground. To get further protection from trees, Mr. Reeves planted one-half mile of shelterbelt on his farm last year which he believes will be even more effective.

With over 80% of approximately 1700 miles of shelterbelt in Texas tall enough to provide protection for areas reaching out 100 to 500 feet, operators of farms with these trees are taking advantage of this to grow the green things so necessary to a balanced diet.

NORTH DAKOTA TAKES RADIO AUDIENCE ON SHOW-ME TRIP

Last month North Dakota put on an Arbor Day planting and cultivation demonstration for the benefit of a "Man on the Street" broadcasting program. Describing the occasion in a memorandum, State Director Cobb says:

"This demonstration which was just outside of town included a hook-up of six radio stations with Moorhead as the initial station and with the field broadcaster on the ground. Mr. Pears ran the show and had a planting crew, planting machine crew, grape and berry hoe, and a duck-foot cultivator, each with a tractor. As each machine and crew reached the broadcaster's position, he interviewed Mr. Pears regarding the operation. Before beginning he also interviewed Mr. Thomas, the district officer, and Mr. Thompson, Extension Forester from Fargo, for a few minutes. Newspapers reported the crowd as 1,000 but probably 500 would be more nearly correct. The college band was out and the high school provided coffee and doughnuts for any who wished them as well as for our crew workers. Everything moved off on schedule and Mr. Pears is to be complimented on his good arrangement.

"After the field demonstration, two Forest Service reels were shown at the high school by the county agent. There were only about 25 present here. Before the first reel, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Pears talked; between the reels, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Coe and the writer talked a few minutes. This demonstration will probably result in many applications.

"It might be added here that District Two had four such demonstrations on this day; one in the morning at the Jamestown College, just outside of Jamestown; also in the morning near Page at a school planting where there were two bands; one in the afternoon near Carrington with a band;

and the demonstration planting held at Mayville was also held in the afternoon. All were well attended and created a great deal of interest."

NOT ALL BEER AND SKITTIES

I suppose most people think that a purchasing agent's life is a bed of roses; that all he has to do is scribble his initials on perfect requisitions from the field, place the necessary order, and bingo! the transaction is washed up. Well, the way it actually works too often is about like this:

We get a requisition for "Two Drill Bits" from a field office on the 29th of the month, which said field office frantically wants not later than the first of the following month. After exposing the requisition with no success to candle heat with a view of bringing out possible information which may have been written with invisible ink, we finally write the field officer that we are unable to fill the order until we get more information. We want to know the size of the bits desired, whether for use in drilling wood, stone, soft metal or iron, and if they are to be used in a carpenter's brace, a breast drill, blacksmith's post drill, or a power drill press. We also chide him a little about waiting until the eleventh hour to place his requisition.

One week later, in a letter indicating that relations between us are somewhat more than strained, we get the necessary information and place the order. Two days later, however, we get another letter from the field officer saying that on second thought he has got the drilling done at the local blacksmith shop and would not need the drill bits after all, and therefore please cancel the order. The "please" is plainly thrown in merely as a matter of convention.

One month passes and we get another requisition from the same field office for "Two Drill Bits, sizes 25/64 and 33/64." No other information is vouchsafed but harking back to the previous order and being loath to stir up any further hostilities we order the same type of bits. Very shortly comes a smoking letter saying don't we know that he now has a blacksmith's post drill and can't use that type of bit any longer - and if not, why?

Yeah, this purchasing agent business is all right - if you have a good tough skin, lots of patience, and an unquenchable belief in the doctrine that the Lord must have known what he was doing when he created some folks.

(Adopted from an essay on the subject by V. C. Rosenwald, Kans.)

ON THE MANNER OF SELLING SHELTERBELTS

That part of our work aimed at creating a demand for shelterbelts to which we give the official designation NEGOTIATIONS, is commonly discussed in terms of salesmanship. This is especially true when the necessary advance plans have been made to provide for a fixed program in each state, and then it is found that the flow of applications lags. In other words, we too are faced with the national problem of over-production. Then we

begin to think of salesmanship, special inducements, and the like, to keep our product moving. Perhaps the fondest hope of the State Director and his field men is that future goal when there are far more applications than can be cared for currently in order that he may plan his work most effectively; won't be bothered with the time-consuming job of getting those last 50 miles of shelterbelts when he needs to give all his time to other seasonal work, and, best of all, he can tell the farmer to go jump in the lake if he hasn't made up his mind or if he is dickering for some green trading stamps. So we have a job of selling.

While need arises to force our sales work at times, there is always the recognized danger that this may place us in the disadvantageous position of being the anxious seller and the farmer the reluctant buyer. Right there I want to make a distinction, and that is the purpose of my writing.

Forcing the sales work and forcing the buyer are two entirely different things. From a broad point of view our educational-demonstrational work is sales promotion, intended to invite the buyer's interest in our commodity. Any amount of that promotional work certainly cannot hurt our program. If, on the other hand, our sales work reacts with the farmer as an attempt to inveigle him into buying, rather than convincing him that he should buy, then I think we are in danger of hurting our commodity and future sales. Premiums, cash discounts, and similar inducements are devices commonly used to tempt the buyer, but he knows as well as we that these inducements in no way improve the quality of the commodity. In fact, they cheapen it. I am wondering how much of that sort of thing we may be unintentionally doing when concessions are made to the farmer as the buyer. Don't we actually cheapen our commodity when we make concessions in order to get his application? To do so is forcing the sale by forcing the buyer instead of promoting a better understanding of the merits of our commodity through educational work as a basis for making him want to buy. If we could make him feel that it is a privilege and a distinction to be able to have an application accepted, then he would be more likely to buy. The National Geographic Magazine handles its subscriptions on that basis.

We have one state where applications exceed the state quotas. Fewer concessions have been made to the farmers to meet their wishes than perhaps in any other state and the AAA payments that go with the shelterbelt are decidedly not used to stimulate applications. Elsewhere we hear of concessions made purposely to meet expressed wishes of the farmers, but it is doubtful if this has resulted in more applications. In fact, the very farmers who have held out for "premiums" or concessions had other excuses when those wishes could be met. They haven't, as yet, been sold on the merits of our program, and it is perhaps just as well that they haven't been induced by special considerations or green trading stamps. Some of our most troublesome cooperators are those who took a shelterbelt more on the basis of the AAA payment than the value of the shelterbelt itself.

Can it be that we might improve this situation by gradually tightening up on these requirements where they have slipped? Certainly there is some evidence that it has not helped to offer these premiums where we have had a decline in acceptance. There is likewise evidence that holding to those requirements has not hurt the general application situation in those areas where "business is good."

An important adjunct to this plan of creating a greater demand would be to "control production." We would need to be careful that we did not absorb the entire demand each year, regardless of the amount, but permitted a little reserve of applications to accumulate and be carried over to the next year. This in itself would create a greater desire to buy. I have always felt that if we could create a "waiting list" in each state, that would do more than anything else to stimulate a greater demand for shelterbelts and at the same time maintain a high quality product at a "profitable price." That does not necessarily mean that the current program would need to be reduced. Promotion work; that is, our I & E program, could be pushed harder to create a greater desire to buy and thus build up gradually a little reserve.

- D. S. Olson, R.O.

(Editor's Note: Olson has opened up a very fertile field for discussion here, and PLAINS FORESTER will be glad to print any comments on his article. Most field officers have had occasion to give this subject a lot of earnest thought and doubtless not all of them will agree with all of Olson's conclusions. For example, it is an incontrovertible fact that in some places where we have the least negotiations problem we have made the fewest concessions to cooperators, but the question is - which is cause and which effect? Likewise, to what degree is it true that the offering of concessions makes the program seem less desirable to prospective cooperators? Or better still, what concessions can we safely offer without bringing about that undesired result? It is certain that we need the very best in good sales promotion technique on this Project, and let's have your ideas on the subject.)

A NEWCOMER LOOKS AT KANSAS

A few months ago I was living in New England. When I decided to come to Kansas, people said, "Oh, don't go to Kansas, trees don't grow out there. The wind blows all the time - why, they even have cyclones and tornadoes. It gets so hot in the summer time you melt, and it's so dry you'll be dehydrated."

I came anyway, and oh! for the chance to have a few of those May-flower ocean-crossers out here. I think I could show them a thing or two. Trees? Why in Sedgwick County alone, there are trees only one year old that are 12 to 15 feet high. They talked about the wind--but a good old New England "noreaster" would make a Kansas wind seem like a balmy breeze barely able to rustle the leaves of a cottonwood. And don't forget the great Hurricane.

As for the heat--I hear it gets pretty warm here, but I think it will take about 90 days of blistering weather to drive out some of the sub-zero temperatures that are still in the marrow of my bones. And as for 'no rain'--five to seven inches in 60 days, that ain't dew!

I don't know what this all leads up to, but I guess I must think Kansas is pretty swell.

- Ken Gosling, Kans.

SILCOX MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following announcement has been received from the Silcox Memorial Fund Committee:

"To Subscribers, Silcox Memorial Fund:

Besides expressing the sincere appreciation of Mrs. Silcox and the Committee for all the many contributions to the Silcox Memorial Fund, we are glad to report to you:

First: Preliminary work has been started on a memorial to be placed on Mt. Silcox, in the Cabinet National Forest, Montana.

Second: Dedicatory ceremonies - which the Committee hopes as many subscribers as possible will attend - can not be held before this fall. Time and place will be announced through the public press.

Third: All indebtedness against the Silcox home in Alexandria has been paid.

Fourth: If there is a small balance, as now seems probable, it will be turned over by the Committee - which through your generous help will then have completed its task - to Mrs. Silcox, who has been and is living in Alexandria, Virginia.

Very truly yours,

SILCOX MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE
By D. F. McGowan, Chairman"

BROADCASTS BRING FAN MAIL

In a recent letter regarding the weekly radio program put on by the Oklahoma State Office and the State Forester's office in Oklahoma City, Ken Taylor had the following to say:

"We are averaging about 40 inquiries per week and to date have totaled nearly 400 requests for information. Six hundred and ninety-eight bulletins and pamphlets have been distributed to the listening public in accordance with these requests. Several chambers of commerce have written in appreciation and during the school year several teachers required listening to our program as a part of a course in conservation.

"Our listeners, or at least our requests, are located principally in the western half of the State. Letters have also been received from listeners in Kansas and Texas. Several miles of 1941 shelterbelts were negotiated as a direct result of our program."

NEBRASKA FARMERS BUY SHELTERBELT HOES

One of the principal drawbacks to adequate cultivation in the past has been a lack of enough specialized equipment. The grape and berry hoe (but why should we call it that when the manufacturer has rechristened it

"shelterbelt hoe") has revolutionized the job of row cultivation, but we have never had enough of these tools to go around. We have always felt that if we had enough hoes, the problem of row cultivation by the farmer would about be solved.

Elbert Evans, in charge of the Columbus, Nebraska Subdistrict, has uncovered a means of making more hoes available to farmers. It works like this: He gets all of the cooperators in a given township together and explains the situation to them. He tells them that the Forest Service has one hoe which it can loan to them, but no more. However, the county commissioners have agreed to help out. They will buy one hoe if the farmers will buy another. This would make three hoes available to the group, sufficient to do the cultivating job without undue crowding.

The plan works like a charm. Generally the group asks Evans when he wants the money, whereupon he tells them that he does not want it at all but the thing for them to do is to appoint a committee to collect the money and buy the hoe. They always do it and sometimes they collect more than enough and have a little "kitty" for maintenance purposes.

So far 20 such township groups have purchased hoes, the county commissioners matching this with an additional 20. Whether the plan is applicable everywhere remains to be seen, of course, but it certainly works in the Columbus Subdistrict.

- E. L. Perry, R.O.

PROJECT BOASTS NEW PUBLICATION

We rise to salute a new but esteemed contemporary. Its name is "The Shelterbelter" and it is published by the Columbus (Nebraska) Subdistrict for distribution to the cooperators on that unit. It is gotten out bimonthly, and its four pages are chock full of interesting news, advice, and anecdote. It is mimeographed on light-blue paper, and is prepared in two-column style.

Our guess is that "The Shelterbelter" will a lot more than pay its way in reducing the necessity for personal contacts with cooperators, and it should prove a powerful aid in the negotiations work. In addition, of course, are the imponderable values represented by the improved good will which attends a manifested interest in a fellow and his affairs.

We wish "The Shelterbelter" well - and a long and a useful life.

PLANS FOR PLAINS TREE PLANTING AN OLD STORY

Just in case we are inclined to picture shelterbelt planting in the Plains Region by the Forest Service as something new, it may be of interest to know that the Forest Service was at least making planting plans on the ground as far back as 1900 -- quite possibly before there were any "Forest Reserves."

This office recently received from Washington original tracings of shelterbelt, farmstead and woodlot planting plans for farms from the

Dakotas through Oklahoma. They are located throughout these states, many being within the area of our present activity, in fact, several are recognized as being within a stone's throw of some of our recently planted belts. The drawings were made in the old Bureau of Forestry in Washington from data undoubtedly gathered in the field and probably at each landowner's request.

It is interesting to note that the recommendations made then would still, in fundamentals at least, stand today. Spacing was mostly 4 x 4 and 4 x 6. Widest spacing noted was 8 x 8. Several species are thoroughly mixed in each case and their choice is much the same as we make in 1941 plantings. More species were recommended then, undoubtedly with too much optimism, but the basic ones were "White" Elm, Hackberry, Green Ash, Box elder, Honey locust, Black locust, Hardy Catalpa, Russian mulberry and the rest. Cottonwood is generally recommended only in the Dakotas, and of course Chinese elm is notable for its absence. Little note is made of soil, but topography as affecting moisture availability is thoroughly accounted for in the choice of species. Some underplanting with Red Cedar is recommended in belts existing at that time (those that had survived the drought of '95). All insist on protection from livestock and fire. One plan involving plantings in several sections in Harper Co., Kansas, even mentions the possibility of use of a "mechanical planter."

Of course these were merely plans. It was the farmer who did the actual planting and we have no way of knowing how closely he followed the plan in each case. However, the fact remains that the Forest Service was attempting to do the same job in much the same manner as we are today.

- W. E. Barnes, R.O.

KANSAS HAS ANIMATED EXHIBITS BUILT

The WPA Museum Project at Topeka, Kansas, is helping to solve our problem of constructing more presentable exhibits in Kansas. We furnish all materials and they furnish the artistic talent and the labor for construction. For about \$100 worth of materials we are getting four different floor exhibits, each with a maximum frontage of 13 feet and adjustable by means of hinged side panels to a minimum frontage of 5 feet. These will be completed by the beginning of our county fair season. One window display carrying out the Cuarto Centennial Coronado theme for use in June and July town celebrations, as well as fairs, is also being constructed for us by the WPA. For the money expended we feel this proposition can't be beat.

The five exhibits are each animated in some way either by a wind blast, mechanical movement of figurines, illuminated map, automatic slide projection or motion pictures. Two of the floor exhibits are additionally arranged with devices for operation by spectators or attendants, which should afford added interest.

- Frank Sampson, Kans.

The Panama Canal Zone, having nearly 200 miles of fine highways on which all traffic travels to the left, is reported to be the only part of the Americas where traffic drives in that manner.

- "Indian Smoke Signals"

"RECREATION OF THE PLAINS"

North Dakota's A. L. Williams has an article in the May "Parks and Recreation," official publication of the American Institute of Park Executives and the American Park Society. Williams' article is entitled "Recreation of the Plains," and an editor's note says that it is a sequel to an article by Kenneth W. Taylor in the January 1939 issue. Taylor at that time was also a member of the North Dakota staff and his story was entitled "Shelterbelts as Recreation Areas and Game Refuges."

Williams' article is well done and is illustrated with six photographs. It deals more with the general economic value of the program to the Plains region than with recreation as such.

AN EXHIBIT ALL READY TO "PLUG IN"

For the past year I've been trying to improve the exhibit we used last fall at county fairs. The exhibit consisted of two model farms, each about 4' square. One was protected by a makeshift shelterbelt and the other was exposed to wind provided by electric fans. The farm buildings and trees, crops and pasture were made to approximate actual conditions and appearance as much as possible.

This year we have finally worked out an exhibit based on the same principle but involving an "action" unit which makes a great deal of difference in its effectiveness.

The entire exhibit is placed on a strip of plywood 2' by 3". Only one farm is used. The shelterbelt is fixed on a 2' piece of 1 x 4. The electric fan provides the wind and also the power for the "action" unit.

The shelterbelt is rigged to the oscillator wheel of the fan so that it stands upright for about 10 seconds, then turns trees down for 10 seconds. This allows the wind to blow across the farm while the trees are turned down and effectively stops blowing while the trees are up.

The whole thing weighs only about 50 pounds, as contrasted with the extreme weight and cumbousness of last year's type. It can be transported readily and requires merely plugging in after being placed in location.

The entire unit costs about \$2.00, not counting labor or the fan. If any one wants more detailed dope on its construction I will be glad to supply it on request.

- Fred R. Yaruss, Okla.

WANTS PLANTING STOCK WITH BETTER ROOT SYSTEMS

In our opinion Dave Olson's "What's to Blame?" article in the March PLAINS FORESTER deserves much more attention than either the tree planters or nursery men have given it so far. Too often we are inclined to criticize and "pass the buck" without offering any constructive suggestions for improvement.

I believe that generally both planters and nursery men have effected a high degree of compliance with the various standards set up, and it is the exception where certain species will not grade up to present specifications in all respects in the different years.

I believe our troubles are rooted a little deeper than the above. Here comes my neck, Dave! When we consider that this Project started from practically scratch, in the raising of vast acreages of hardwood species, in connection with which we often had no precedent to guide us, I think it is a miracle that as many are growing today as there are, not taking into consideration the severe climatic conditions under which they were established nor our own human shortcomings.

In many instances our knowledge of nursery practices has improved and as a result we are raising a better brand of trees. For some species, however, we have not made much progress and as a result must continually replant them in order to secure a stand. I am speaking of Hackberry, Osage Orange, Walnut, Oak and possibly several others.

From innumerable observations made during the past several years, I have finally come to the conclusion that for at least the above-mentioned species our trouble is Roots, or rather a lack of them. We talk about top-root ratios in conifers but I don't believe I have ever heard top-root ratios discussed in connection with hardwoods. As I understand, practically all of our hardwoods are dug 11 inches deep - short enough to be accommodated by our planting shovel. Therein lies the possibility for mistake.

None of the above trees are shallowly fibrous-rooted seedlings, and all of them have ordinarily been very slow growers in our shelterbelts. All of them have quite sturdy main roots. By cutting these roots off at 11" I feel that their chances in shelterbelt plantings have been reduced to 65% or lower before they are ever planted, especially since most of their rootlets will be cut off as they are growing below even the one-foot level. Cutting off these rootlets on the trees is equivalent to cutting off a man's fingers and then expecting him to pick up food with the palms of his hands, without previous practice, in a race with starvation.

For five consecutive years in some of the same species I have seen good grade trees planted and fail to grow. Occasionally there would be a "catch" on some belts. More often the trees would leaf out, and then stand still all summer, and maybe the next, and then die.

Unless a tree is able to establish itself and make some growth the same year it is planted, the odds are against its ever growing. Osage Orange is notoriously known for finally mustering its strength late in the first season and leafing out and then carrying on a spindly existence or dying within the next season. All stages of starvation growth are exhibited by the various species being discussed.

The outstanding example I recall was a row of coffee tree planted in a 1938 shelterbelt. For two years this row lived off its bulbous roots desperately striving against time in an effort to establish itself on an F-1 site, aided by excellent cultivation and care and meanwhile growing to

a one-foot height. Finally it "caught", and shot to a four-foot height the third year. This example and others convinced me that if stub-rooted, rootless seedlings have a difficult time establishing themselves on our best sites, they surely will fail on the more difficult ones.

Our survival counts emphasize this point. Despite our replanting most of our belts once, it is necessary to return the following year to replace losses to original stock that was counted as alive the second year, while in reality it was waging a losing fight to maintain itself, finally succumbing.

The solution to this problem is not easy. If it is need of a more fibrously rooted stock, I say let's develop it in the nursery rather than in the field. If an extra undercutting is necessary during the summer in order to remove part of a then smaller tap root and thus stimulate fibrous growth, let's do it even at increased nursery cost. Let's set one replanting as our limit on these difficult species. I would like to see more discussion on this particular problem.

- Karl F. Ziegler, S. Dak.

RAMBLINGS OF THOUGHT

Once in every-so-often when the boys get together to discuss "the best way to get the job done", someone (usually the boss) says, "Why doesn't someone write an article for PLAINS FORESTER?"

I'll bet the editor doesn't even know we give his efforts any consideration here in Texas. The above statement will prove otherwise; or will it?

The point is, what do we have that Kansas doesn't already have? (I picked Kansas because it is my home state).

I could boast of being the subdistrict officer stationed the farthest south, which wouldn't impress anyone except that North Dakota might realize that Texas is in the shelterbelt business, too, and has been working on this year's cultivation problems since around March 1.

The details of how many deer were seen in one of our shelterbelts is known only by the District Officer, so he will have to put out this information.

The fact that a "twister" drove a one-by-six board through a shelterbelt Cottonwood leaving it protruding from both sides, would probably be classed in the same category as a "fish story" except that Mr. Schaffer took some pictures of it when he was around last month, and I'll have visual proof, I hope. The local editor wouldn't believe it until I took him to see exhibit "A". One could speculate at length as to what might have happened to some luckless cow if the shelterbelt had not been planted.

- Marvin G. Angle, Tex.

A CONTRIBUTION TO TREE SEED TECHNIQUES

Carl Taylor, who rules the "roost" at the Norfolk (Nebraska) Nursery and Seed Extractory, has again demonstrated his well-known versatility by preparing a mimeographed treatise entitled "Germination Behavior of Tree Seeds as Observed in the Regular Handling of Seed at the Norfolk Nursery and Extractory." Carl has kept detailed records of his seed germination work over a period of years and has followed up some of the leads observed in this work with some independent investigations that have uncovered some very worth-while data which he has included in this manuscript, in addition to quite detailed records of the normal germination habits of the various species used in Nebraska PSFP planting.

Copies of this handbook have been made available to the nursery personnel of our project and to personnel of other agencies likewise engaged in nursery work. Judging from the response received, Carl's efforts are being accorded a favorable reception.

- H. E. Engstrom, R.O.

WE HAVE A SOLDIER

Merrill A. Matthews is the first member of the Kansas PSFP organization to be called under the Selective Service Act. Merrill was transferred January 7 from the Nebraska Unit to Anthony where he has had charge of the subdistrict since that time. He reported for military duty on June 9. We are sorry to lose Merrill from the Kansas Unit but we are proud of the fact that he has answered his country's call.

- John D. Hall, Kans.

EARLY NEBRASKA LEGISLATION ENCOURAGED TREE PLANTING

The following paragraph from "Nebraska Old and New," by A. E. Sheldon, Superintendent of the Nebraska Historical Society, gives an interesting sidelight on early Nebraska legislation designed to encourage tree planting:

"Another inducement for early settlers to plant trees was an act of the Nebraska legislature in 1869, under which, for every acre of forest trees planted by a settler, \$100 worth of his property was exempt from taxation. Money was very scarce in those days. Here was a chance for the settlers to pay their taxes by planting trees on their own claims. As a result of this law, nearly all the claims soon had enough trees growing on them to exempt the settlers from paying any taxes. So little money came into the State treasury that there was not enough to pay expenses and the state was compelled to borrow. This law was repealed in 1877 but thousands of groves on the prairies of eastern Nebraska stand today as witnesses to its benefits."

- L. S. Matthew, R.O.

Some species of trees are like some men - they are able to adapt themselves to an environment.

VISITORS

E. I. Kotok, Chief of State and Private Forestry, Washington, after spending a day in the Regional Office so that we all feel "really acquainted" now, went on to the Grand Island State Office, viewing some of our new shelterbelts en route. We were sorry that he couldn't have spent more time and taken a trip to our older belts, for he was so genuinely interested in them, and we wanted to "show off."

Henry H. (Jim) Gurley, Office of Recreation and Lands, Region One, stopped in for a brief chat. He was in Lincoln to attend the Land Use Planning Conference.

Robert E. Clark, ("Bob" to the old timers on the Project) of the Office of Recreation and Lands, Region Two, was also in attendance at the Land Use Planning Conference, but found time to call on his old friends of the PSFP. We remembered him as the tall, lean type, but getting back "Out West" has done something for him. He could double for Tarzan, the way he's looking now.

A HURRIED FAREWELL

Out of a clear sky, Banff Young bade us farewell Saturday morning (June 14) after receiving a hurried call to Brooklyn, New York, for 45 days' intensive training prior to an assignment as agent with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. We hated to see him go, but since he is following the line of work in which he is very much interested, we are happy for him, and wish him the best of luck.

THE PSFP HAS A NEW BOOSTER

At exactly 1:10 P.M., on April 16, 1941, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Martley, of Salem, South Dakota, became the proud parents of a six and a half pound, blue-eyed, auburn-haired girl. We don't know if she resembles Pa or not but at any rate she has his hair and eyes. Howard evidently wants to show his girl what a great guy "Pop" is, the way he has been tearing into his cultivation program lately.

- Steve V. Moro, S. Dak.

ALL-PURPOSE TREES

Reforestation, says an authority, is not an expenditure. It is one of the soundest investments a state can make. Most states have begun to see it in that light and are carrying on forestry projects with the cooperation of the federal government.

There are states so aware of the advantages of extensive tree planting that they do not limit it to forest areas. Wisconsin, in addition to developing forests, is planting trees in parks, along highways, at wayside shelters, in farm woodlots, along streams to prevent erosion, and in extensive shelter belts.

Such a program benefits agriculture, fishing and hunting, water supply, industry and recreation.

- Minot Daily News, Minot, N. Dak.